



CONCERNED VETERANS FOR AMERICA

2019 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ★



GUARANTEEING OUR VETERANS GET THE CARE AND BENEFITS THEY'VE EARNED

- **ENSURE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VA MISSION ACT.** The VA MISSION Act's new Veteran Community Care Program is set to be rolled out on June 6th, 2019. It is essential **Congress ensures the VA meet the law's deadlines to establish access and quality standards for this new program** to make sure the law is able to serve qualifying veterans on June 6th. Relatedly, the 116th Congress should oppose any efforts to restrict or limit the ability of veterans to utilize the new community program, which would undermine the original intent of the VA MISSION Act.
- **PRESERVE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VA EMPLOYEES.** The bipartisan VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, which became law in 2017, made it easier to discipline and fire VA employees found guilty of misconduct. **Congress should ensure this law is properly implemented and resist efforts to repeal or weaken its core provisions.**
- **IMPLEMENT COMMONSENSE COST CONTROLS FOR THE VA BUDGET.** The VA's budget has more than quadrupled over the last 17 years and has far outpaced the growth in beneficiaries. **Congress should ensure the VA is wisely managing taxpayer dollars and controlling the growth of costs** to ensure veterans get care and benefits expediently and responsibly. Potential reforms include: making the VA the secondary payer for non-service-connected community care, aligning patient copays with those of TRICARE, and eliminating unused and excess infrastructure.

PROVIDING FOR A STRONG NATIONAL DEFENSE

- **AUTHORIZE ANOTHER ROUND OF BRAC.** The Department of Defense (DoD) has not held a round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) since 2005. According to DoD estimates, the military has an 18 percent excess basing capacity, and eliminating it could save up to \$2 billion dollars annually. **Congress should authorize another round of BRAC in the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act.**
- **PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY ON ALLIED BURDEN SHARING.** Understanding our allies' contributions to shared defense efforts is critical to making better foreign policy decisions. **Congress should reinstitute the requirement to post the annual report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense** – which was ended in 2003.
- **RE-EXAMINE THE 2001 AUMF.** Congress passed the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. However, the legislation is still being used 17 years later to justify armed intervention in places with no connection to the 9/11 attacks. **Congress needs to reassess its role in overseeing America's foreign policy; and a good first step would be to re-examine the 2001 AUMF** with regard to the wars currently being fought under its auspices.

SECURING AMERICA'S FINANCIAL FUTURE

- **RESTRAIN FEDERAL SPENDING.** For too long, both political parties have ignored the looming financial crisis stemming from out-of-control entitlement spending and the inability even to stick to the modest limits on discretionary spending established by the bipartisan Budget Control Act. **Congress must return to regular budget order, avoid eleventh-hour omnibus spending bills and make the difficult but necessary budget choices** to safeguard America's financial future.